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JESSY ALLAN.



BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE DECISION;"

Published by O.D. Cooke & Co. Hartford.

JESSY ALLAN,

A STORY

FOUNDED ON FACTS,

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE DECISION,"

"PROFESSION IS NOT PRINCIPLE," &c.

thus being reprinted
FROM THE THIRD ENGLISH EDITION.



TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE SISTERS, ANNE AND JANE,

BY MRS. SHERWOOD,

AUTHOR OF

"LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER," &c.

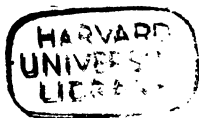


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JESSY ALLAN.

(FOUNDED ON FACTS.)

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE DECISION."

I OFTEN wonder what the children who attend Sabbath-Schools think of all the labour and pains which are bestowed upon them? I wonder if they ever ask themselves this question, 'Why do our Sabbath-School masters come to meet with us so kindly every Sabbath evening?—However cold, or wet, or bad it is, still they come.—What pleasure can it give them to hear us repeat what they have heard repeated a hundred times before? They get nothing by coming but trouble. We are instructed, but what is their reward? And those ladies who visit our schools, and sit down amongst

us, and seem so pleased when we do well, and so grieved when we are careless and inattentive, and who listen so patiently to our ill got lessons, and reprove us so gently, and encourage us so kindly, why are they so anxious about us?—What good does our improvement do to them? and why should they be sorry when we are careless, and will not receive instruction?’ My dear children, this is the reason,—your Sabbath-masters, and the ladies who teach you, have themselves been taught that there is but one way of salvation. That way is made known in the Bible, and if you are ignorant of it, however young you may be, you are on the way that leads to everlasting misery. Your teachers therefore pity you, and it is this pity and compassion which leads them to give up their time and attention to you; and the highest reward they desire and pray for is, that you would have pity on your own souls, and listen to that instruction which will lead you into the way of salvation.

I mean, in the following pages, to relate the history of a girl, who made that kind of

ladies met at the school. Mrs. Allan, accordingly, went on that day, and had the child admitted, as she readily agreed to observe all the rules mentioned by the ladies, and particularly one, which they said could not be dispensed with. It was, that Jessy should be punctual to the school-hours, and attend regularly every day. When Mrs. Allan promised over and over again to observe this rule, she knew very well that she did not mean to keep her word ; for, two days in the week, she was obliged to go to the garden, where she got her vegetables, and on those days Jessy had to watch the stand ; but she just thought within herself, that she had better not tell the truth, lest it might be a difficulty in the way of getting Jessy admitted, and that she could easily teach her child to invent excuses, and tell many lies every week to account for her absence. When the ladies spoke also of the Sabbath-School, and the importance of being early instructed in religion, Mrs. Allan sighed, and turned up her eyes, and said, ‘ Ah ! yes ladies, and I am sure the blessing of Heaven

will follow you, for providing instruction for so many children, poor things. I think little of any thing else for my Jessy, compared to religious instruction.'

When the ladies spoke more kindly to Mrs. Allan, after her having said this, she went away quite pleased with her success, but she forgot that there had been all the time, an eye upon her that she could not deceive, and that her lies and hypocrisy were marked down in God's book, against the day of death and judgment.

When Jessy came to school, she knew almost nothing. Her whole life, excepting the time she had spent in learning to read, had been passed in playing near her mother's door with other idle children, or in watching the stand in her mother's absence, or, perhaps, going an errand, or some such way. Mrs. Allan lived in a low house with an earthen floor, and was very dirty and disorderly, so that Jessy did not even know what it was to be clean and neat in her person,—as for her soul, she thought no more about it, than if she had been without one.

Jessy was, however, good tempered and cheerful, though, on first coming to school, very inattentive. After she had attended a few days, and got at her ease, she became a great favourite with the other girls for she was very obliging, and so lively and playful that they never could be out of humour, or quarrel with any thing she said or did. The mistress, though often obliged to reprove Jessy, yet could not help loving her, because, instead of looking sulky or stupid, when she was found fault with, she seemed vexed, and immediately tried anxiously to do better, though her idle habits and thoughtlessness would soon lead her into faults again. The ladies also, who visited the school, observed with approbation how anxious she was to have her lessons ready to repeat ; and that, when they spoke to her, she listened to all they said, as if she really wished to understand it. On the Sabbath evenings, Mrs. Allan allowed Jessy to attend school pretty regularly, as she had nothing for her to do at home, and the master spoke so kindly, that Jessy loved to go, and

really wished to please him. When the master observed this, he encouraged her, and sometimes addressed what he said particularly to her.

One Sabbath evening, after having spoken to the children on the duty of prayer, the master said, 'I hope, children, you all know what it is to come to God by prayer, and to make your requests to him in the name of Christ.'

Jessy was standing near the master, and he said to her, 'Jessy, I trust you are one of those children who have chosen God to be the guide of your youth, and that you come to him as to a father, to ask forgiveness for your sins in his name, who bore their punishment for you. I trust you have given your heart to Christ, and have received him to be your Saviour, and your Lord?'

The master looked at Jessy, and she immediately answered, 'Yes,' though she had scarcely ever thought of prayer, and did not even know what was meant by taking Christ for her Saviour. And this shewed the real

state of Jessy's heart. She wished to please her master and the ladies, and her school-mistress, because she loved their notice and kindness; but she did not fear God's displeasure, or value his love and kindness, but dared to stand, as she did, in his presence, and tell a lie, and that lie too, about what God only could know. This proved that she really knew nothing about God, nor believed what the master had told her of his character; for, if she had, she would have trembled at the thought of such an awful wilful provocation of his holy displeasure. The master did not see Jessy's heart as God did, but believed what she had said, and spoke very kindly to her.

‘My dear child’ said he, ‘if you have indeed given your heart to your Redeemer while so young there are many promises in Scripture addressed to you and you may, and ought to believe them, as firmly as if Christ himself had spoken them to you from heaven. He says to you, ‘I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.’

When the master was about to conclude

for the evening, he said, ' Now, my dear young friends, we are going to separate till next Sabbath ; are there any of you who mean to live another week without coming to that Saviour, who invites you so tenderly to come to him ? He offers you salvation. —He offers you his love.—He offers to guide you as a shepherd,—nay, even to carry you as lambs in his bosom. He is present at this moment in this place, though you see him not. He assures you in his word, that he is waiting to be gracious to any of you, or all of you, if you will only come to him. Will you refuse ? I hope none of your hearts are so cold and wicked as to do so ; and now we shall pray to him to receive, and bless and guide us. Those who choose to come to Jesus, may join me in their hearts while I pray.—those who refuse, may think of other things perhaps of the day of judgment when he who now calls upon them to come and be his own dear lambs, will be their Judge and will ask them why they refused his call, and will tell them that they must abide by their own choice ; and since they refused him, they

must depart from his presence for ever, and take up their abode for eternity in that awful place where the 'worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.' And now, children, choose.' The master paused for an instant, and Jessy said within herself, 'I choose to come to Jesus now;' and when the master began to pray, she prayed with him in her heart. He said, 'O! Lord, thou art now present with us. Thou seest and knowest all our hearts. Some of us desire to come to thee; but we are so ignorant, we scarcely know how. We desire to know thee more. We give ourselves to thee. We believe thy promise, that thou wilt receive all who come to thee,—that thou wilt love us, and save us, and give us new hearts, and lead us by thy Spirit in the right way, as a shepherd guides his sheep; and that, while we are so ignorant, and unable to take a step in the right way, thou wilt support and carry us through every difficulty, as a shepherd carries the little weak lambs in his bosom.'

†The master said more in his prayer, but

this was what Jessy remembered ; perhaps she might not so well understand what followed. When he had finished, he said, ' Now, my dear children, you who have given yourselves to Christ, do not talk and trifle as you go home, but remember what a solemn thing you have done. You have chosen the Lord to be your Lord and Master, and have given yourselves to him. From henceforth you are not your own. You belong to Christ, and you are in all things to seek to please him. He has commanded this day to be kept holy. Go, then, in silence and thankfulness to your homes, and, before you sleep, again seek that Lord who is ever near you, and may you so find him, my dear young friends, as to love him with your whole hearts and souls.'

The children then sung part of a psalm, and afterwards separated to their different homes. Jessy remembered what the master had said, and though some of the girls began to talk to her when they got into the street, she did not reply to them. but quickened her pace, and reached home without

having spoken to any one. When she got there, she found her mother standing at the door, and several of her neighbours with her, spending the evening of the Lord's day in idleness and foolish talk, making remarks on the people as they passed from evening church, or from spending the sabbath in visiting, or country walks.

‘Here comes Jessy,’ said her mother, ‘she has kirk and preachings enough for us all now.’

‘And she looks as glum as the minister himself,’ said a neighbour on observing that Jessy did not laugh at her mother's remark.

‘Are ye weel eneugh, Jessy?’ asked her mother.

‘O! yes, mother,’ replied Jessy, slipping past her into the house; but as it was getting late, Mrs. Allan almost immediately followed her, and began talking about her neighbours, and how such a one had been dressed that day; and ‘Mary Thompson had a shawl on, I am sure it could not cost under forty shillings, and her lassie with a new

straw bonnet, I wonder where folk get the money,' and so on.

The last advice of the master was still in Jessy's thoughts, and she longed to kneel down and pray but, while her mother talked in this way, she could not. Mrs. Allan, however, soon went to bed, and then, when all was quiet and still, Jessy raised her thoughts to Christ, and prayed nearly in the same words the master had used, and then fell into a sound and peaceful sleep.

I do not mean to tell much of what passed while Jessy was at school, because it would take a great deal of time to do so; and I particularly wish to call the attention of my young readers to some events which took place after she had left school, and no longer either received good advice or instruction, and had no proper example set before her. Jessy's conduct then proved how much she really had profited by the instructions bestowed on her at school. I shall just mention, that after the evening I have described, Jessy improved rapidly in every way. Her mind was opened to perceive,

that hitherto, though she had tried to please the ladies, and the Sabbath-School master, and her school-mistress, she had not known God, and had forgotten that it was the heart he regarded; and she began to feel, that her own heart was very sinful, and that, however earnestly she might desire to do what she knew to be right and pleasing in the sight of God, she constantly failed, and could not for one day or one half day, live without sinning. This knowledge of her own sinful nature made Christ precious to her, when she dared to come to him, and trust to his blood to wash away her sins; but she was still so ignorant, that she sometimes thought her sins so great, she feared to come to Christ.

Before Jessy came to school, she had been in the constant habit of lying, and so difficult was it to cure that sinful habit, that even after she knew how wicked it was, her first impulse, when accused of a fault, was to deny it, even though she had committed it, and after doing so she was afraid to pray, and would go about for days with a guilty

conscience, and in terror lest God should cut her off, and appoint her a portion with liars in everlasting misery. One thing the Sabbath-School master said on this subject, was very useful to Jessy. It was this :

‘ Young Christians, when they have sinned, are afraid to return to Christ by prayer ; but, my dear young friends, why so ? It is not from the Bible you have been taught this fear. The Bible says,—‘ turn O back-sliding children ! saith the Lord : Return, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you : for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever : only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.’ What do you expect to gain by continuing at a distance from Christ ? Do you hope to make yourselves more holy, and intend, on finding that you have become so, to return to him ? Such thoughts, if you entertain them, proceed not from the teaching of the Bible, nor from the Spirit of truth, but from the devil, the enemy of your souls ; and it is only the ignorance and deceitfulness of your hearts which lead you to believe them.

and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." By remaining at a distance from Christ, you cut yourselves off from the source of your strength, without whom you have no more power to do what is pleasing to God than a branch has power to grow and bring forth fruit when it is cut off from its parent tree. And remember what an awful end our Lord declares shall await those who do not abide in him. — 'If a man abide not in me, he is cast off as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.' Take heed therefore, my dear young friends, how you listen to the temptations of the evil one, or to your own sinful and unbelieving hearts, when they would keep you away from Christ, for he is ready to pardon. He is your advocate with the Father,—your High Priest, who bears your names on his heart, and Jesus Christ himself says,—'Abide in me,

continually intercedes for you. His blood cleanseth from all sin; and there is no other way whatever by which you can receive forgiveness or remission, but by faith in him.'

These words of the master made a deep impression on Jessy's heart. She felt peace and joy fill her soul when she thought of that Saviour to whom she might always return,—who would wash away her sins in his own blood who would intercede for her,—who would if she trusted in him deliver her from the power of all her sins and enable her to do what was pleasing in his holy sight. After this when she felt afraid to pray, she knew that it was her own evil heart which made her so, and that the longer she remained without confessing her sins and seeking forgiveness, the more would her fears increase, and the more averse would she become to pray; and then she would think of the awful state of those who were separate from Christ. These thoughts brought her often to her Saviour; and, therefore, she was enabled to overcome those sinful habits which she now knew

were hateful in the sight of God, and from which she therefore earnestly prayed to be delivered. Jessy also constantly watched herself, lest she should be led into sin; for she had heard the Sabbath-School master say, that those were only hypocrites who came to Christ, and prayed to be delivered from their sins, while all the time they really did not hate them, or try in every way they could to resist them. Jessy did not pray and labour in vain. In a short time, the school-mistress remarked, with praise, how very exactly she kept to the truth in all she said; and observed, what a difference there was in that respect, since she first came to school. Then she had always an excuse ready for every fault; and answered, on all occasions, what she thought would keep herself in favour, whether it was quite the truth or not; but now she considered before she spoke, and then told the simple truth, whatever might be the consequence.

This was sweet praise to Jessy, and cause of much thankfulness to that Lord who had been her Saviour from the power of this sin.

Many little girls are so carefully watched over, and instructed by their parents that they cannot acquire such bad habits as poor Jessy's wicked mother suffered unchecked in her; but those girls ought to feel thankful to God for having had such parents, and to remember, that much smaller sins committed by them, must appear very wicked in the sight of a perfectly holy God, because they have always been taught what was right, and have always seen their good parents do what was right; for unto whomsoever much is given, of them shall be much required.'

When Jessy had been about a year and a half at school, a person, named Thomas Grey, came to lodge in a house near her mother's. He had been a soldier; and, after having served long enough to entitle him to the pension, had got his discharge, and was now returned to spend the remainder of his days in his own country. Thomas Grey's wife was dead, and his two children doing for themselves. He was not, however an old man, though much weather-

beaten, and rather rheumatic, from having been exposed to very different climates ; and thinking now, that he might still be able to earn something by his labour, he wished to find a wife to keep his house, and prepare his food. After a very short acquaintance, he fixed upon Jessy's mother as a proper person, observing that she was a bustling body, and able to support herself and her daughter. Mrs. Allan was easily persuaded to marry Thomas, as she thought his pension would go a great way in supporting the family ; she also hoped that he would be able to earn something. In short, Mrs. Allan was so discontented, that she liked the idea of any change, and thought she could not, at least, be worse off than she was already ; so, with little consideration on either side, and scarcely any knowledge of each other, Mrs. Allan and Thomas Grey were married.

Poor Jessy did not much like this change ; but as her mother told her that step-fathers were not like step-mothers, but were always kind to their step-children, she

tried to be as obliging as she could to her new father. For some months, things went on smoothly enough. There was, however, one part of her step-father's conduct which poor Jessy found it very hard to endure. He never spoke without using some dreadful oath, or taking the name of God in vain. Jessy ventured to intreat him gently not to do so ; and, at first, he said she was very right, and that it was a bad habit he had got ; but this willingness to acknowledge the sinfulness of this evil habit, lasted only while Thomas continued in good humour with his new situation. When he began to perceive how matters really were,—that his new wife was an idle slattern, who spent great part of her time in gossiping with her neighbours, while, excepting the attempt at order made by poor Jessy, her house, and little family matters, were left in utter confusion, the heat and violence of his temper began to shew themselves ; and, in his moments of impatience and anger, the oaths he uttered made Jessy tremble ; and then, even a look of intreaty

from her, only brought curses on herself for meddling, with her hypocritical whining, and sanctified looks, while she had better look nearer home, and see what a ——— mother she had. I shall not repeat the shocking names by which this man called his wife, or the most sinful manner in which she, on her part, replied to them. During the last six months that Jessy continued at school, these shameful scenes became more and more frequent; and as the time approached at which her mother said she must begin to earn her own livelihood, Jessy became most anxious to procure a situation as a servant. In this, however, she did not succeed. The school mistress recommended her to two different ladies, but her mother, being anxious herself to profit by Jessy's wages, was so unreasonable in the terms she mentioned, as those on which she alone would part with her child, that both ladies declined taking her, and poor Jessy, who would thankfully have gone to either, on almost any terms, had no other prospect than remaining in her most un-

comfortable home. Her mother took her from school, and made some exertion to get her work, and at last succeeded in procuring her constant employment in an upholsterer's shop. Jessy was very comfortable in this situation. She went to work early in the morning, and only came home for her meals, so that she saw less of the miseries of her home than formerly. When she returned after her day's work, her stepfather was generally absent. Her mother, too, was usually standing some where near her own door, gossiping with her idle neighbours, and Jessy would slip into the house unperceived by them. All within she would find in confusion but her first occupation was to make things as orderly as she could and then she would sit down with her Bible, either near the window, or on a stool on the new-swept hearth, when there was none but fire-light, and read, and think, and pray, till she was interrupted by the return of her mother. These were precious seasons to poor Jessy; and sometimes, young as she was, she could, in thought, trace the ways

of God. and amidst all the disadvantages of her situation. see his mercy and kindness. 'It is true,' she would think, 'I have no parents. when I return from my work, who receive me kindly and encourage me, and praise me for my attention to my business. as the parents of some my companions do; nor to make the most of what I can earn, in clothing as well as feeding me. My mother does not care though I am the worst clothed of all the girls in the shop, though I earn more than any girl of the same age; but I can discover that all this God can turn into good for me. When I return home. and find no mother. I think though this house is empty, God is present; though my earthly parent cares little for me. my heavenly Father has done great things for me. He has placed me in so poor a situation. that my mother could not afford to pay for my schooling. but that led her to seek instruction for me. from those who considered my soul's concerns their chief care. I have been carefully taught the way of salvation,—I have been led to give myself to

Christ,—I have received this precious Bible, and been instructed in its meaning, so far as to know something of God.—something of Christ,—something of my own sinful state. I could have learnt none of this at home.—and now if I had a kind mother, and a comfortable pleasant home to come to, should I remember God? Might I not be satisfied and happy, and forget Him? But, as it is, I can say from my heart, ‘God is my portion.’ When I return to this little solitary place, it is to meet God. My thoughts immediately go to Christ. It seems as if he was present with me and I speak to him in prayer as to my very kindest —only —dearest —almighty Friend. I tell him all that is in my heart; and when I wish to hear him speak to me, I open this Bible and I read his own words. O how sweet and pleasant they are to my soul!—then, whatever happens still I feel near to him, and can say to him, in the midst of outward confusion, “Thou shalt hide me in the secret of thy presence; thou shalt

keep me secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

/ As winter approached, Jessy's evening seasons of peace and solitude were gradually shortened. When the weather became cold, and it was early dark, her mother could no longer stand in the street with her neighbours. She made up for this by entering into conversation eagerly with all those who came to purchase any of the articles which, during the day, were displayed on her stand, but which, at the close of it, were now carried into her house. Jessy's home, in winter, became thus the resort of all the idle women in the neighbourhood. This idle talking led to much evil besides neglect of family duties. Sinners enticed each other—and Jessy's mother gradually became addicted to the most ruinous of all vices—drinking. Thomas Grey who now acted as a porter, indulged in the same sin. He stood almost all day on the street, waiting for any work that offered; but as he was not active, and generally somewhat stupified by drink, he was not much em-

ployed, and earned but little. Of that little he gave scarcely any to his wife, but spent almost the whole of it in the indulgence of his sinful habit, telling his wife, that she would get the pension, which was more than enough to pay for all the comforts that his house offered him. At the first term for receiving this pension after Thomas had married Mrs. Allan, it barely paid the debts that had been contracted from trusting to it. The second term was now near, and house rent, and many other things, had been left unpaid, still looking forward to this fund. The people who had given Mrs. Grey credit, knew well at what time the pension was paid, and a day or two after she received it, all of them demanded their money. Mrs. Grey paid as far as she could, but found that she had not enough to pay half the demands that were made upon her. She dared not tell her husband this, for Thomas now thought little of beating her, when in anger. She therefore fell on every means in her power to induce her creditors to wait, and did not scruple to make promises she

knew she never could fulfil. To one person she promised, that Jessy should pay what she earned at the end of every week, and this poor Jessy insisted on doing herself, till the debt was paid, though cold as it was, she still went to her work with nothing warmer to wrap herself in than a thin shawl, and her shoes almost worn out. When Jessy had paid the last shilling that her mother's creditor claimed, the woman said to her, 'My good lassie, I see that you are really honest; and, I am sure, you are not idle like your mother who is as careless as she is idle; for if she had taken notice, she might have known, that you have paid me two weeks wages more than I had a right to. I have let you do this without saying any thing, because I knew that if your mother once got your money, little good from it would come to you, and you are in sore want of some bit shawl to keep you warm—so with your last week's wages I have got you a second-hand grey cloak, and wait a minute, and I'll go with you myself, and fit you in a pair of shoes.' Jessy

ited ; and, while doing so, her heart rose in thankfulness to that Lord who never forsook her, and who had now put it into the heart of a stranger to care for her.

Matters after this became worse and worse with Mrs. Grey. She could not easily get credit, and her own earnings, joined to Jessy's, were now the only means of support for the family. With good management this might have done ; but with Mrs. Grey's bad management, and her evil habits, she was soon in real poverty, and therefore, most anxious to obtain assistance in any way she could. About this time, a benevolent gentleman had ordered coals to be sold to the poor from his coal-yard, in her neighbourhood, at a very reduced price. Mrs. Grey eagerly availed herself of this gentleman's goodness, and one day, when Jessy was at home for her scanty dinner, he desired her to go and get some of the coals. These coals were given out at a fixed hour, and then there was much crowding and shoving at the place. Jessy was anxious to get forward, as she had little time to spare ;

so she watched and kept her place, that she might be served in her turn. A woman behind her, after pushing herself past many others, at last held out her basket, and intreated one of the men to fling her coals into it, as her infant was left alone in the house. The man wished to oblige her, and threw a piece into her basket. Another piece, however, from the careless way the woman held her basket, missed it, and fell with great violence against poor Jessy's leg. The blow threw her down, and there was immediately a cry, 'The poor lassie's leg is broken! What a shame! That comes of serving people out of their turn!'

The man who had thrown the piece of coal, ran to Jessy, and tried to raise her to her feet; but the pain from the blow was so great, that she could not stand, and almost fainted. She was known to some of the people near her, and on finding where she lived, the man lifted her up in his arms and carried her towards her house, with the greatest care and tenderness. A crowd followed, and Mrs. Grey ran out, as usual.

on hearing a bustle in the street. On discovering that her own child was the cause, and seeing her carried, pale, and apparently lifeless, she screamed out, 'Jessy, *my* Jessy! What is it? Who has done this?' in such a loud and fearful voice, as to recall Jessy to her senses. She got down, and tried to stand, and said, 'O! mother, do not scream that way, it is not so bad.' She could say no more, and was helped into the house, and laid upon her little bed. It was now discovered that the blood was running down Jessy's leg into her shoe; and the man who had carried her home, immediately offered to carry her to an apothecary's who lived near, where the wound would be properly dressed, and to pay whatever was necessary, both at this time and afterwards, till she was well again.

'Indeed, you can do nothing less,' said one of the women who had followed Jessy.

'Was it him that did it?' asked Mrs. Grey, in a voice of kindling anger.

'Deed was it,' replied the other, 'flinging coals about among the folk,—that's charity!'

Mrs. Grey then burst forth, scolding, and calling the man by every opprobrious name her fury supplied. Poor Jessy, though in very great pain, intreated her mother to be quiet, assuring her that the man was not in the least to blame; but Mrs. Grey would not listen, and the man, at last, after hearing in silence every sort of abuse, felt himself growing angry, and turning to Jessy, said, 'I am sorry for what has happened to you. I have offered what I could to make up for my part in it, but I see I can be of no use among such a set of'——he stopped, and did not allow his anger to get the better of him; then pushing the scolding women out of his way, left the house.

When Jessy's leg was examined, it was found that the sharp edge of the coal had made a frightfully deep wound. All around this wound appeared much bruised, and was now swelled and black. Each of the women present, recommended a different manner of dressing the wound. Poor Jessy intreated that it might be bound up, and she left in peace. She felt sick and faint from

pain, and the talking and disputes around her were most distressing. At last it was agreed that it should be done up in soap and sugar. This dressing, applied on a coarse rag, and bound with others of the same description, and far from clean, was at last finished, and the people went away. Mrs. Grey went out also, to tell all that had happened to a neighbour who had not been present. Jessy was at last left in peace, and immediately her thoughts turned to that God, whose presence always seemed to return to her soul when she was left alone. Hitherto, when she had thought of God, it had been with feelings of thankfulness. She had constantly been able to say to herself, 'God is my best friend. He has, indeed, been to me a father of the fatherless.' Whatever good I have received, has either been through his servants, and done for his sake, or from my Saviour himself, guiding me in the paths of righteousness, and thus procuring for me favour, and imparting happiness and peace.' Now poor Jessy was at a loss. She thought of God,

but her heart filled and she could only weep. 'Had God forsaken her?' Jessy did not yet know that the children of God must learn to trust in him at *all* times, both when his dispensations give them joy, and when he sees fit to chasten and to try them. Jessy's Bible was always kept in a little chest close by her bed. She now took it out, and opened it to look for a text which came into her mind; but the exertion of stretching out of her bed, made her leg so excessively painful, that, for a little, she could attend only to it. When it got somewhat less uneasy, she began her search, and after some time spent in it, she found the text she wanted. It was this: 'Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' Jessy read the account given of Job's afflictions, and wondered how little she had ever cared to read it before. When she had read of all that the Lord suffered to happen to this still beloved, and highly approved of servant, she almost smiled on remembering, that a few minutes before, she had thought God had forsaken

her, because he had suffered her to fall into a comparatively trifling affliction. Her mind became calm and easy, and when the mind is so, pain is not half so ill to bear. When we can say, 'It is *my* God, *my* Father, *my* Refiner, who has sent this, in order to purify my soul, and prepare me for himself,' we can much more easily endure the sharpest suffering, and feel willing to love and kiss the hand that afflicts us for our good. We know that He 'does not afflict willingly,' but because it is necessary for us.

During some days, Jessy was subjected to a great deal of suffering, from the manner in which her mother showed her anxiety for her recovery. To every person who came in, she must uncover and show poor Jessy's wound. Thus the dressing was taken off many times in the day. Besides this, a great variety of remedies were tried, so that, at the end of a week, Jessy was in greater pain than she had been even at first. This continued for some time longer, till at last the wound assumed a very

unfavourable appearance, and Thomas Grey, who had, while serving as a soldier, himself been wounded, and confined to a hospital, and by that means knew what were considered bad symptoms, went himself to the dispensary, and begged a doctor to come and visit his step-daughter. Had this been done at first, poor Jessy might have been saved much. When the doctor came and saw the wound, he seemed really sorry for Jessy,—said she must be suffering dreadfully ; and when she answered him with a smile on her now pale, young face, that she did not *always* suffer *very* much, he turned away quite moved. He looked for an instant round the disorderly apartment, into which two women had followed him, from curiosity, to hear what he would prescribe, and then said in a low voice to Jessy, ‘ I am sure you cannot be properly attended to, or kept quiet here ; would you have any objection to going to the Infirmary ? ’

‘ Should I be in quietness there, Sir ? ’ asked Jessy.

‘Perfectly so, and every thing done to give you ease.’

‘O! if it is quiet, I should like well to go,’ replied Jessy earnestly.

The doctor turned to her mother. ‘My good woman, your daughter would be much better in the Infirmary, where she could be properly attended to, than here.’

‘In the Infirmary!’ repeated Mrs. Grey; ‘My bairn in the Infirmary! Never. Attended to! I am sure I do nothing but attend to her: and there is not a friend I have, or one of the neighbours, who has not come to ask for her, and see her sore leg, every day since she got it. Attended to, indeed!’

‘But that is the worst thing possible for her, my good woman,’ replied the doctor mildly. ‘You intend it for kindness; but your girl ought to be kept perfectly quiet, and see no person but the one who attends her; that would be difficult here, as I see you have articles for sale at your door, and must be constantly coming and going; so I really think you had better allow your

daughter to go where she may be kept as she ought to be.'

Mrs. Grey seemed at a loss for a reply to this mild remonstrance ; but a neighbour whispered something to her, and then she said, ' Sir, if you want Jessy to go to the Infirmary, because you think it is too much trouble to come here and see her, I must just try to get another doctor, but go to the Infirmary Jessy shall not.'

' O mother !' said Jessy, ' how can you speak that way. I am much obliged to you, Sir, for being so kind as to come.'

' I shall prove to you, woman,' said the Doctor, ' that it is not to save myself trouble I have made this proposal ; but if you continue to undo the dressings of this wound, I must just tell you, that you have more to answer for than you are aware of.' He then, in a manner that, compared to the usual one, gave Jessy scarcely any pain, dressed the sore, and after again charging Mrs. Grey on no account whatever to meddle with it till he returned, left the house.

When Thomas Grey returned at night,

his wife soon told him, that the fine doctor he had sent, had proposed Jessy's going to the Infirmary.

‘Well,’ replied Thomas, ‘I am sure she would be far better there than here.’

‘If she was your own child, Thomas, you would not say that.’

‘If it was my own self!’ replied Thomas, with one of his oaths, ‘I would say it. Have I not been in an hospital, and do I not know that it is a far better place to get any thing healed in, than this disorderly cellar, that’s shaken like an earthquake by every cart that goes by, and that you fill with clattering women from morning to night.’

‘I wish you could get my mother to let me go, father,’ said Jessy. ‘I am sure I should be far sooner well; and then, mother, you would be glad you had not hindered me.’

‘And have you the sense to wish to go, Jessy?’ asked Thomas.

‘I wish very much to go,’ replied Jessy. ‘The doctor told me it was quiet there, and that every thing would be done to give

me ease ; and I am sure I would soon be better, for you cannot think, father, what a different thing it was when he dressed it to-day.'

'Then go you shall, my lassie !' said Thomas firmly, 'and that before another day is over your head.'

Mrs. Grey's anger had been kindling during this conversation, and now burst forth in loud scolding, in the course of which she declared, that no power on earth should take her child to the Infirmary.

'We shall see,' said Thomas, firmly.

Jessy attempted to interpose, and make peace, but her mother only scolded the more loudly and fiercely. At last Thomas said, in a suppressed tone of voice, 'There is your great love for Jessy,—there is the way you keep her quiet ! Though I never saw the lassie till a year ago, and wish from my soul I had never seen either her or her mother, I would not for a hundred pounds make such a clamour beside her, after the doctor said so much about keeping her quiet.'

'But,' said Mrs. Grey, lowering her voice

a little,' 'you would send her to the Infirmary, to have her leg ta'en off—for I am sure they'll do nothing less.'

Jessy started when her mother said this.

The scolding continued, and her father sometimes answered with oaths; but Jessy, who was used to those dreadful sounds, heard them not. She could not bear to think of what her mother had said, yet she could think of nothing else. She had heard frightful stories of operations at the Infirmary, and now they all returned to her mind. She breathed short, and her heart beat quick from fear. The doctor had ordered her a draught to make her sleep, which she had taken, but now she could not sleep, and the draught only made her head uneasy, and added to the confusion and horridness of the ideas with which her imagination was filled. Never did poor Jessy pass a more miserable night. Towards morning she dozed occasionally, but, after a short interval of sleep, would start awake from some frightful dream.

The doctor came early next day. Tho-

mas had staid at home, that he might see him, and get a line of admission for Jessy into the Infirmary. When the doctor saw Jessy, and felt her pulse, he asked if she had slept.

‘Very little,’ replied Jessy.

‘Did you take the draught?’

‘Yes, Sir.’

‘Then something happened to prevent your getting to sleep, I suppose?’

Thomas looked at his wife, and then said, ‘Noise, Sir, prevented her sleeping;—no person could have fallen asleep here last night.’

‘That will never do,’ said the doctor with displeasure; ‘your child will never recover in such circumstances.’

‘It was not just the noise that kept me from sleeping,’ said Jessy; ‘but tell me, Doctor, if you please, will it be necessary,—is my leg so ill, that it must be taken off?’

Jessy asked this question with difficulty, and could not keep her voice from changing, and tears filling her eyes.

‘There,’ said Thomas to his wife, ‘I told

you that, in the poor lassie's weak state, she would take your saying that to heart.'

'I was only in joke Jessy,' said her mother; 'as true as death, I did not mean what I said. How could you think of that?'

'Poor thing!' said the doctor, compassionately; 'no wonder she had little sleep, after such cruel rashness.'

'But, Sir,' said Jessy, 'you have not said that I will recover without—' She did not like to finish the painful question.

'Can I say, Jessy, whether or not you will recover?' said the doctor, gently.—'Your life and health are not in my hands; all we can do is to use the means. I am sure you know this my good girl.'

'Oh! yes,' said Jessy, her heart filling on hearing words so unlike what she was used to; and, looking at the doctor with love and reverence, 'You have only to tell me, Sir, what I ought to do, and I shall try to do it; and if the means fail—'

'We must not look forward to evil,' interrupted the doctor; you know we are desired to take no thought for the morrow.

Believe me, my good girl, God will give you strength according to your day,—only trust in him.'

The doctor spoke thus to Jessy as he dressed her wound, and she felt almost sorry when his rapid and easy operation was finished.

When the doctor went away, Thomas followed him to the door. His wife did the same. When they returned, Thomas said to Jessy, 'I am going to tell an Infirmary chair to be brought, Jessy; you will be ready for it, my lassie. The doctor says he will see you in the evening.'

✶ Jessy looked at her mother.—Mrs. Grey was silent. She seemed stupified, and Jessy wondered what the doctor had said to her.

'You will come and see me, mother,' said Jessy, when her father had gone out.

'Oh! ay,' replied Mrs. Grey; 'but the doctor said I must only come at this hour, and at that hour. It's a pretty thing to keep a mother from her own child.'

Jessy was glad to find that her mother was going to part with her so easily, and now

intreated her to get ready for their going. Mrs. Grey was to accompany Jessy, and see her settled in that ward of the Infirmary set apart for those in her circumstances, and she now began to bustle about, and make her own appearance as respectable as she could, and also to get Jessy made ready to be moved. Before this could be accomplished, a bustle in the street called her attention. As she was going to the door, a neighbour put in her head, saying, 'It's an Infirmary chair.' A crowd of children had followed this well known vehicle, the very sight of which makes one feel sad, as it recalls so many painful images of sickness, and want of comfortable homes. Poor Jessy's heart sunk when she heard it was come. Her mother went to the door, and came back with her hands clasped together.

'Oh! Jessy,' exclaimed she, 'what for would you be so keen to go away from your own mother? I am sure, when you see that awful chair, you will not go,—no power would make me set my foot in it.'

The men who had brought the chair, now

entered to offer their services to carry out the sick person.

‘Oh! Jessy, do not go,’ whispered her mother.

‘I *must* now, dear mother. Do not stop me,—the sooner it is over the better.’

The men then carried her carefully and tenderly to the chair. Several people stood around it, who expressed their compassion for the ‘poor thing!’ She heard one woman say, ‘Dear me, she looks dreadfully white!’ And another, ‘She’ll never come back!’

Jessy was carried to the Infirmary, and then to the bed in the Ward, with less pain than she had feared. All around her was so clean and comfortable, and, above all, so quiet, that even before her mother left her, she felt reconciled to her new situation. When her mother was obliged to bid her farewell, her heart sunk for a little; but the stillness around her made her feel as if she was alone, and then she began to think of God, and to remember that he was present with her. She thought and prayed over

what had passed within the last two days. The doctor's words returned to her memory, and she tried to trust God for whatever was before her; and after a little time she fell asleep, and slept tranquilly for several hours. On waking, she heard voices in the room, and drawing aside the curtain, saw her own doctor, and several others, standing or stooping over the bed of a patient not far from hers,

The nurse came and shut her curtain, saying, in a whisper, 'Every body must stay quiet while the doctors are here. They do not like people to be peeping from the beds.'

In a short time her doctor drew aside her curtain, and spoke kindly to her. He then called to an elderly gentleman, and said, 'This is the girl I mentioned to you.'

The elder doctor immediately came, and Jessy's wound was uncovered. She looked earnestly at him, while he carefully examined it. He then said something to her doctor in a language she did not understand, and shook his head. 'We may continue

the remedies you have begun for a few days,' added he, 'but delay, I fear, will only increase the evil.'

He went away, and Jessy's own doctor staid to bandage up the wound. While doing so, he asked her if she had any book to amuse her. She drew her Bible from under the pillow. 'I have this, Sir.'

He looked much pleased. 'If you really love that book, Jessy, we know whose child you are; and whatever you may have to suffer, all will work together for your good.'

After the doctors were gone, Jessy thought over what she had understood in their conversation respecting her. She felt certain that they thought very unfavourably of her case; and her own doctor's last words seemed to imply, that she had still to look forward to severe suffering. Her mother's words the night before returned to her thoughts, but she could not yet bear to think they might be true. The first time the nurse came near her bed, she asked her if she knew what the doctors thought of her case.

The nurse hesitated, and then said, 'They do not seem to think well of it for the present.'

'But do you think they mean to take off my leg?'

'I cannot tell,—they did not say any thing to me. But if it should be so bad as to come to that, you know many a person has had that done, and been strong and healthy all the rest of their lives.'

'Oh! but such dreadful pain as it must be!' exclaimed Jessy.

'Oh! no,' replied the nurse; 'I have heard many people say that they had suffered more pain before than during the operation; and then you know, even if it should be very sore for a short time,—ten minutes perhaps, or a quarter of an hour, it is the last pain, and then you get ease and sleep. I am sure, with that leg, you must always be suffering, and can get very little sleep.'

'That is very true,' replied Jessy.

'Well,' answered the nurse, 'would it not be better to suffer sharply for a short time, and then be well, than to be continually in

pain, and have all your strength wasted away ?'

Jessy agreed, and felt much comforted by what the nurse had said. For two or three days after this, Jessy continued in pretty much the same state. The perfect quiet which always reigned around her, composed her mind, and she could without interruption read her Bible, and think and pray over what she read. The nurse, who was pleased with the grateful manner in which she received all her attentions, had brought her a book, saying, 'I see you are very fond of reading. This is a book my mother was always at, when she was not reading her Bible. I do not know what it is about, for I never cared for reading ; but I have kept it for her sake, and I am sure I may trust it with you, and may be you may like it.'

Jessy thanked the nurse gratefully. This book was, 'The Scots Worthies,' and no other could have been better suited to while away Jessy's thoughts from the pain she constantly endured. She read this account of the sufferings undergone by the faithful servants of

her Lord, with an interest so deep, as to make her forget all else,—where she was,—her own pain,—what she herself might still have to suffer,—every thing, while she followed in thought one or other of those ‘Witnesses’ for the truth, fearlessly proclaiming it to the scattered sheep of Christ’s fold, who dared to gather to them, in lonely glens, or beneath the rocky cliffs or unfrequented parts of the sea-shore, or among the hills:—she followed them to the caves and woods, where they fled from their persecutors, or to prisons or cruel deaths, and her young and warm heart led her almost to wish she had been amongst those who had been called to suffer for her Lord’s cause, as she found, that among ‘The Scots Worthies’ there had been not only ministers who preached the truth, but many, and some of them younger than herself, who had witnessed to their faith in Christ by dying, rather than give up serving him. When it became dark, and she could no longer read, she still thought of them, and tried to discover whether she, too, might not honour

her Lord in her sufferings. She remembered that the Bible spoke both of *doing* the will, and *suffering* the will of God. She prayed to be enabled to understand the meaning of the last expression ; and she thought, that as *doing* the will of God meant obedience to his laws, which we were incapable of obeying without his continual assistance, so *suffering* his will must mean, to submit with love and gentleness, and without murmuring, to whatever he appointed, in the firm belief of what he himself has declared, that, ‘whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,’—and this she also knew she could not do without his assistance. She prayed earnestly, therefore, for grace to enable her to *suffer* the will of her Lord, whatever it might be.

During these few days, many doctors had examined Jessy’s leg most carefully, and she remarked, that all of them seemed to think ill of it. She was herself sensible that the pain was not diminished, and that the parts affected were gradually spreading. This she told her mother, who visited her daily.

‘Ay,’ replied Mrs. Grey, ‘they told me

that it would be so before you came here, Jessy.'

'And what more did the doctor say, mother?'

'I must not tell you, Jessy. They forbade me, and I promised, because they said my telling you would do you ill. But I think all their fine attendance has not done you much good.'

Poor Jessy did not press her mother to break her word, but she felt certain, that what she had, so much feared would assuredly take place. Now, however, she could, with some measure of composure, look forward to whatever might occur, as sent by her heavenly Father : and fervently prayed for his grace, to prepare and enable her to suffer his will, so as to honour him, by showing his power to support the very feeblest of those who put their trust in him.

Next forenoon Jessy's own doctor, and the gentleman he had called to look at her leg the first day she was in the Infirmary, came together to her bed-side. Her own doctor spoke cheerfully to her, and undid

the dressings on her wound. When the other doctor saw it, he said, 'I was right—it is just as I expected, nothing will stop its progress.' He then felt Jessy's pulse and added, 'She seems less weak than when she came; that is good.'

He then went away. Jessy's doctor dressed her wound in silence, and saw her laid comfortably. He then sat down on the side of her bed, and said to her in a low voice, 'Jessy, do you remember a promise you made to me, the second day I visited you?'

Jessy thought for an instant. 'No, Sir, but whatever it was, I am ready to fulfil it if I can.'

'Your promise was, Jessy, that if I would just tell you any thing you ought to do in order to recover your health, you would do it.'

'Well, Sir, I am sure it is the least I can do. I wish I could do *any* thing to show you how much I feel obliged by all your kindness.'

'Well, Jessy, I will tell you the truth

from the first day I saw this wound, I thought it would never heal. All the doctors who have seen it since you came here, are of the same opinion ; and now there is but one thing we can do,—if that were done, we all think you would be quite well and stout afterwards.'

'I understand you, Sir,' said Jessy, becoming very pale, 'and I am ready to undergo whatever you thing right.'

The doctor looked at Jessy. 'Are you sure you understand me ?' asked he.

'Quite sure, replied Jessy, smiling, though her eyes filled with tears, 'and I am much obliged to you for all the trouble you have taken, Sir, and for the gentle way you have told me this. I have been thinking, ever since I came here, that it might end this way.'

'Your mother first put it into your head in a rash way,' said the doctor ; 'I was sorry for that, because it might have affected your nerves, and made you regard it as much more formidable than it really is.'

'Yes, Sir : the thought was very dread-

ful to me at first, but now I trust I shall be enabled to suffer whatever the Lord sees fit to be good for me.'

'You will be enabled, Jessy, be assured, if you firmly put your trust in God,—none trusted him in vain.' The doctor then stood thoughtfully for a little. When he rose to go away, he said, 'We do not think it proper to delay in such cases as yours, Jessy, I shall see you to-morrow morning. I know that you are ready when it is the proper time.'

He then went away, and when Jessy had taken his last step as he left the room, all power to act firmly seemed to go with him, and she sunk down in her bed, and wept bitterly. Every painful thing came before her,—the dreadful operation,—lameness for ever. She never would be able to go to service, she must always remain in her mother's house,—all the thoughts of happier days when she might get a situation in some pious family, and escape from scenes of drunkenness, and swearing, and confusion,—all must be given up forever! At last a voice seemed

to whisper in Jessy's heart, 'Is this the way you *suffer* the will of your Lord?' She became calm, and said to herself, 'And is this the way I *trust* to his promise, that he will make all things work together for my good?' She remembered that God had said in his word, 'Call on me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' And how am I to understand this? thought Jessy. Am I now to expect that God will deliver me from what I fear? No, that would be a miracle,—and miracles were wrought, not to convince believers, but unbelievers. God will deliver me from such trouble as prevents my soul from loving and trusting him. He will prove to me, that he can enable me to bear whatever he inflicts, and still to love, and still to believe, that he has no pleasure in my afflictions, but sends them for my good. Nay, more, to believe, that in all these afflictions my Lord is afflicted with me; and while he thus delivers me from all the bitterness of the trials he sees necessary to send, he will, by giving me to feel his power to support under, and sweeten

them all, enable me to show forth the glory of his supporting grace and love. When Jessy was enabled to think thus, her mind became calm, and a sweet and heavenly peace was shed abroad in her heart. While in this happy state of mind, she heard some one approaching her bed, and supposing it was her mother, she turned away her face for a moment, to implore strength for the trying scene she expected, when she should inform her of the truth. On turning round again, however, not her mother, but her good school-mistress stood by her bed, her looks full of kindness and compassion. Jessy's heart filled. She had not seen her mistress since before she met with her accident :—

‘O mistress!’ said she, bursting into tears, ‘I thought you had forgotten me.’

The mistress could not herself keep from tears. ‘No, Jessy! I have thought the same of you. I never heard what had happened to you till yesterday.’

‘And have you heard every thing, mistress?’ asked Jessy. ‘Do you know what is before me?’

‘Yes, Jessy,’ replied the mistress, her lip trembling as she spoke, ‘the nurse has told me all. I hope the Lord has prepared you for it, better than I was prepared to hear of it.’

‘Yes, mistress, the Lord has wonderfully reconciled me to his will in this trial. *You* know, mistress, how much evil I have to look forward to, if I live after it. *You* know the kind of home I must now spend the rest of my days in.’

Jessy could scarcely say this for weeping, and the mistress could not answer, but having drawn near her, took her hand in hers, and just wept with her. Jessy threw her arms round her kind friend’s neck, and said, sobbing, ‘O mistress! you will not think this looks like resignation to the will of God, but, indeed, though my heart is full, and I cannot help crying this way, yet I feel happy; but seeing you, puts me in mind of so many things.’

‘My dear Jessy,’ said the mistress, ‘do not let yourself forebode evil. The Lord reigns. All hearts are in his hands. He makes *all things* work together for good to

those who love him. Surely, after all he has done for you, Jessy, you may trust him now. Was your home any better when he put it into the heart of your mother to bring you where he was to meet you with instruction, and lead you to himself? Has he not continued to guide and bless you amidst all the disadvantages of that home? and now is he not teaching you, that it is upon himself, who brought his salvation near to you, when you thought not on him, that you must rely? He is teaching you, that you must not say within your heart, I will go to this situation, or to that situation, where I may have a good example and be kept in God's ways; but I will go to that Lord whom I have taken for my master, and my guide, and my portion, and I will wait on him, and look on whatever situation his providence places me in, as the very best for me.'

'Yes, yes, dear mistress,' replied Jessy, 'Every word you say makes my heart cling closer to him. I will not fear the future.'

After this, Jessy had a long conversation with her mistress, during which she fully

opened her heart to that kind and sincere friend on every subject which had given her uneasiness, and received from her much advice, and much comfort; after which she remained quite composed, and when alone, spent most of her time in prayer. When her mother came, she was enabled to speak words of comfort to her, and took that opportunity of pressing home upon her mind, the necessity of knowing and serving God, if we would hope to be supported in affliction, or prepared for death.

Early next day, Jessy was visited by her doctor. He felt her pulse.

‘You are no worse to-day, Jessy,’ said he kindly.

‘No, Sir, thank God,’ replied Jessy.

‘You remember what I said to you yesterday, Jessy, that when the patient had strength for it, we made no delays, after having determined that an operation was necessary.’

‘I do, Sir,’ replied Jessy, becoming very pale, ‘and I trust I am ready.’

‘We think of to-day,’ said the doctor gently.

‘To-day!’ repeated Jessy. ‘Well, Sir, whenever you think it best.’

‘God will support you, Jessy ; put your whole trust in him,’ said the doctor. ‘I will now send the nurse to make you ready. Do not fear. It will not last long.’ The doctor left her, and Jessy prayed fervently for support. In a little, the nurse came and spoke very encouragingly. All necessary preparations were soon made for Jessy to be taken to the place where the operation was to be performed. The doctor came again and felt her pulse.

‘It will soon be over, my good girl, remember God is with you,’ said he kindly.

‘I hope you are to do it, Sir,’ said Jessy earnestly.

‘A much more skilful doctor is to do it, Jessy ; one, in comparison of whom I am only a beginner.’

‘O ! Sir, I wish you would do it, rather than any other doctor. I would feel, when it was a servant of God who made me suffer, more as if it was the hand of my Lord.’

‘It is your Lord’s hand, Jessy, whatever instrument he pleases to use. It is still his gracious, gentle hand; and it is his mercy which makes even this severe trial as easy as the greatest skill can make it.

‘It is so, indeed,’ said Jessy.

‘I will be near you all the time,’ added the doctor kindly.

‘More mercy,’ whispered Jessy, as she was carried from her bed.

The nurse had put her shawl over her head, and desired her not to look, as the sight of the necessary preparations would only frighten her, and Jessy scrupulously obeyed this injunction.

In less than an hour, the operation was over, and Jessy again laid in bed. She said afterwards, that she had suffered less than she expected; and that all the time she felt as sure of the presence of her Lord and Saviour, as if the veil had been withdrawn, and she admitted amongst the spirits of the ‘just made perfect.’

For some days, Jessy was kept very quiet.

Her mother, and the school-mistress, visited her, but she was only allowed to speak to them for a few minutes. To the mistress, she said, 'Pray for me my dear mistress, that the Lord may be present with me,—that he may continue to support me, and enable me to rest satisfied that all is best.' To her mother, she said, 'The Lord has fulfilled his promise to me. I called upon him, and he delivered me from all fear, and enabled me to submit willingly to whatever he saw to be good for me. O! mother,' added she earnestly, 'why will you not come to Christ? O! if you only knew him! Think of all he has done for us! O! be persuaded to listen to his blessed and gentle voice! Mother, why will you die? You must perish if you reject him, and live as you do.' Mrs. Grey wept when Jessy spoke this to her, but she did no more. She did not offer up one prayer. She knew, that if she came to Christ, she must give up all her sins; and she preferred them to the favour of her Saviour. If she had prayed

to him, he would have delivered her from the power of sin ; but she did not wish to be delivered. O what a choice ! A choice for eternity ! Sin in this world,—everlasting woe in the next ! Who would believe that rational creatures could be capable of such unutterable folly as to make such a choice ?

Jessy remained for several weeks in the Infirmary, after undergoing the operation ; and during that time, she saw, to her great grief, that her mother was more than ever given up to sin. The truth was, that Mrs. Grey, while Jessy was at home, had been in some degree restrained by her presence, and had also found her house more attractive, for Jessy was kind-hearted and cheerful, and when her mother was in good humour, she could at times while away her thoughts, and keep her tolerably happy at home ; but now, when Jessy was absent, and Mrs Grey had no companion in her solitude, but her own evil conscience, she never staid alone a moment when she could

help it, and was thus continually in the way of temptation. Several times before Jessy left the Infirmary, her mother visited her in such a state of intoxication, as to make her ashamed, besides the misery occasioned to her by the thoughts of her wretched state ; and now that Jessy was getting better, if she ventured to say any thing to her mother when sober, it was very ill received.

Poor Jessy's heart sunk, as the time approached that she must return to her home. Though she had suffered much bodily pain in the Infirmary, still it had been a time of peace, and comfort, and improvement to her soul ; and her heart sickened at the thought of the swearing, and drunkenness, and entire want of peace and comfort, which she must meet in all she had now to look to as her home ; but she remembered that God was present every where, and that he could change the hearts of his most determined enemies. For this she prayed ; and endeavouring to 'cast all her cares,' as she was commanded 'on the Lord,' she conti-

nued to spend those few peaceful days she remained in the Infirmary, in reading her precious Bible, her dear 'Scots Worthies,' and in thoughts of God.

At last Jessy's doctor pronounced her cure complete, and after giving her some advice about the management of the still tender limb, kindly took leave of her, desiring her to send immediately for him, if she ever felt the least unwell. Jessy wept as she thanked him for all his kindness; and in the afternoon of the same day, her mother came for her, and she returned on crutches to her home. On entering the house, Jessy was more than ever struck with its confused and dirty appearance; but her attention was soon called from regarding it, by the entrance of several of the neighbours, who, having known that her mother had gone to fetch her, had watched their return; and now she was overwhelmed with questions. 'I thought ye were to get a wooden leg, Jessy; must ye aye gang on crutches? O! woman, that would be an

awfu' thing.' 'I must not use my wooden leg for a little time yet,' replied Jessy; 'but I walk quite easily on the crutches.' 'Poor thing! said a neighbour; 'but take heart, Jessy, ye'll be able to sew as well as ever, and that's a genteeler way of winning one's bread, than going to service.'

Jessy could scarcely keep from crying, while her neighbours thus attempted to comfort her. 'I trust the Lord will enable me to serve him in the situation he has appointed for me,' said she at last, with much seriousness, 'his will must be best.' The women were silent, and on Jessy saying something more of the same kind, they, one after the other, recollected something they had to do, and went away. Poor Jessy had then time to look around her, as her mother also soon went out. All seemed worse than when she left it, and some articles of furniture were gone,—Jessy guessed too easily where. Her own little bed and her box remained, however, in their own corner of the comfortless room. Jessy put her Bible

into her box, and feeling, at least, the pleasantness of the liberty she might enjoy in her own home, began to move about slowly on her crutches, and put things a little into order. In a short time her mother returned, her conduct betraying too evidently on what errand she had gone out.

She spoke much and loud, but what she said was quite incoherent. At a later hour, Thomas Grey also returned, in no better state than his wife ;—but it is very painful to describe wickedness, and it can do good to no one to read such descriptions. I shall therefore say little more of Thomas Grey, or his wretched wife, but as it may be necessary to account for some parts of Jessy's conduct.

A few days after her return home, her good school-mistress accompanied Jessy to the shop where she had worked before she met with her accident. She had intreated the school-mistress to go with her, because she could not now depend on her mother being sober at any part of the day, and she

feared she might disgrace herself before the shop people. The mistress, on going to the shop, explained the cause of Jessy's absence, and when the master saw her standing, rather ashamed, leaning on her crutches, he seemed very sorry for her, and assured her, that as she had always been a most diligent worker while she was with him, that now, whoever wanted work, she never should ; and that, if she preferred it, she might have some to do at her own home. Jessy gratefully accepted of this offer, and for a few weeks worked at home ; but as soon as she was able to walk with ease on her wooden leg, she again went regularly to the shop, as formerly, and 'lame Jessy Allan' soon became the best and most trusted workwoman in the shop.

Jessy continued for nearly two years thus to attend to her business, pleasing her employer, and respected by all her fellow work-people. During this time, her mother and step-father became gradually more and more enslaved to their ruling vice. Jessy's

wages were, however, a great means of their support ; they were, therefore, more from greed and selfishness, than from regard to her, always willing to please her. She was, however, obliged at last to take the management of her wages into her own hand, and this brought upon her, sometimes coldness and abuse, sometimes attempts to wheedle her out of her earnings ; but Jessy had thought and prayed over the matter, and was convinced that she ought not to assist her parents in their indulgence of sin. She was therefore firm, and while she did all in her power to procure real comforts for them, never, when she could help it, assisted them in sinning. While Jessy was 'diligent in business,' she was also 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' The Sabbath, and the Lord's house became her delight. She continued to attend the Sabbath-evening School, where she had first been led to love and serve the Lord, till she was sixteen. She was then advised by the master to go rather to Church, as he neces-

sarily had to address most of what he said, to those who had still to learn the very first principles of religion, and she ought, he said, to press on, and add to her faith 'knowledge.' Jessy followed this kind advice, and earnestly sought to profit by it.

Mrs. Grey almost never went to church, and she had no seat any where. There was one minister however, whose preaching, Jessy very soon after she began to think seriously of religion, found she preferred to any other she ever heard. In his church, as soon as she was able, she took a seat for herself. There was another young girl came to the same pew, whose appearance very much interested Jessy. She seemed, like herself, always to come to church alone.—She looked very sickly, and listened to the preacher, as if she was indeed hearing a message from God. Jessy and she very often remained in church together between sermons, and sometimes they entered a little into conversation on what they had heard. By degrees, they became

more intimate, and at length met each other with pleasure and kindness. They, however, met only on the Sabbath; for though they walked home together, and her friend passed Jessy's house to reach her own, Jessy never liked to ask her in, for she was ashamed of what she must have seen. This continued till about the time Jessy left the Sabbath School. Amongst many other things the master had said to her, he had particularly spoken on the nature and intention of the Lord's Supper. About this time, that ordinance was to be administered in the church where Jessy attended. The pew in which she usually sat, was one of those which was removed during the service; she and her friend were therefore obliged to find seats elsewhere. On this occasion the church was very crowded, and after Jessy had with difficulty got a place, she observed that her friend, Mary Scott, could find no seat, and was standing near where she sat. She beckoned to her, and they continued to stand and sit, by turns,

during the early part of the service. When the people began to move forward to the tables, Jessy knew she must not remain where she was then standing, and reluctantly turned to leave the church for a time, and Mary immediately followed her.

‘O Jessy!’ said Mary, when they had got out of church, ‘did not you feel it hard to be obliged to come away, just when Mr. ——— came down to serve the ‘table?’

‘Yes,’ replied Jessy, ‘but I just thought, as I came out, Well, I trust this is the last time I shall be obliged to stay away.’

‘What, Jessy, do you think of joining so soon? It is well with you if you dare venture.’

‘*Dare, Mary?*’ repeated Jessy. ‘Does not our Lord himself command us to ‘do this in remembrance of him?’ I think it is more daring to stay away, after he has given us so plain a command.’

‘But then, Jessy, the command was given to the true disciples of Christ. I am sure, when Mr. ——— was fencing the tables to-

day, I thought within myself, Will any one dare to approach ?”

‘That is so strange,’ replied Jessy, ‘for it was just when he was fencing the tables, that I thought he was describing, as it were, exactly what the Lord had done for my soul. Do you not remember, Mary, when he spoke of those who were invited to partake of the Lord’s Supper, he said, that Christ was all their hope,—that to them he was ‘precious,’—that to his death alone they looked, as a propitiation for their sins. They did not suppose that their own repentance, or tears, or mourning, could wash away their sins, but they believed that his precious blood would wash them away. They therefore had come to him, and continued to come to him, that through the cleansing virtue of that blood, they might have forgiveness, and have their guilt removed, and the fear of God’s displeasure taken away. That they ardently desired to be holy, but knew that they could not make themselves so ; and therefore, also, Christ

was most precious to them, because of his fulness they must receive grace, and life, and strength. Thus, in every sense, Christ was to the believing soul, altogether 'precious.' And do you not recollect what Mr. — said after that, Mary? 'If any of you that hear me can say, that to you Christ is indeed 'precious,'—that you trust in him, and him only, for salvation,—that you rest satisfied in the belief, that his blood cleanseth from all sin,—and that you have trusted, and are still trusting in its power to wash away your guilt, and to reconcile you to God:—if the death of Christ is in this way the only hope and support of your souls, then you have by faith already partaken of the reality. Come, then, and partake of the symbols appointed by the Lord to confirm your faith, and bring even before your eyes, and into your hearts, the memorials of his dying love.' Cannot you say from your inmost heart, Mary, that to you Christ is 'precious'?

'Yes, Jessy,—at least at times I trust I can,—but you have remembered the last

part of what Mr. —— said. ^{***}Do you remember how he began ?

‘ Yes,’ replied Jessy, ‘ but he was then addressing those who thought they were worthy communicants, while their hearts were set on this world ; and who desired to be saved by Christ, from hell, but valued him not as a Saviour from sin.’ ‘ Oh !’ added Mary, who was of a melancholy and timid disposition, ‘ it was awful what he said of their state !’

“ ‘ Yes,’ replied Jessy, ‘ but I am sure, Mary, you desire to be saved from the power of sin.’

‘ I think I can appeal to the Searcher of hearts, that I do,’ answered Mary.

‘ Why, then apply those alarming passages to yourself, Mary ?’

‘ I fear deceiving myself, Jessy. You know our hearts are deceitful above all things.’

‘ But you know,’ said Jessy, ‘ we would have to speak to Mr. —— before we joined, and he would examine us, and assist us to examine ourselves.’

Mary shook her head, but made no answer, and they then returned into church.

After this, Jessy and Mary had many conversations on the subject of the Lord's Supper; and a few weeks before it was again administered in their church, Jessy had prevailed on her friend to go with her to her minister, and ask to be admitted. He appointed them to come to him for several succeeding times, conversed and prayed with them, and then encouraged them by his assurances, that he trusted they were indeed lambs of Christ's fold, who ought to join his people in obeying his last command.

After this solemn, but joyful period, Jessy and Mary were more than ever united to each other. Jessy found that Mary's parents were Highlanders, and went regularly to the Gaelic Chapel. Mary who had come to Edinburgh when a child, to reside with an aunt, did not understand Gaelic, and had chosen to attend the same church with Jessy, for the same reason,—her preference of the minister. Mary, who was too deli-

cate to go to service, assisted in maintaining herself, by taking in work.

About a year after this period, Jessy took a very severe cold, and finding it scarcely possible to get work done properly in her mother's dark and confused house, she went out too soon to work at the shop. She thus got additional cold, and became so ill, that she was confined to bed, and obliged to send for her kind doctor. He came immediately, and attended regularly till Jessy was again able to go out. He desired her to take great care of herself, and avoid cold. This, however, was not easy. It was now winter, and after the short day closed in, the door of Mrs. Grey's house was constantly open, and Jessy felt the cold air in a way she never felt it before. While she had been confined and unable to work, her wicked mother had pawned part of her clothes; and this she had done, although Jessy's master, knowing the character of her parents, had regularly sent half the amount of her wages at the end of every

week. Mrs. Grey had got this money, but said, 'a sick body always costs more than a well one.' Jessy was much hurt when she discovered this. She was also obliged to go out much less warmly clothed than she ought to have been in her state of health, and soon again began to feel unwell. She, however, struggled against the weakness and languor she felt, and continued to go to work, till she became so ill as to be confined to bed again for some days, after which, as soon as she was able, she returned to her work. In this way she passed the winter, sometimes being obliged to pass days without working at all, at other times obliged to take work in at home. During this period of sickness, her mother became less kind to her every day ; and often, when in bad humour, reproached her with being a burden on her ; and foretold, that she would soon be unable to gain any thing, and then she might just go to the poor's house, for she was sure she could not maintain her. Poor Jessy carried all these sor-

to God, and prayed earnestly to be directed what to do. She thought, that if she could by any means procure a little room, where she might keep herself warm, take care of herself, she might perhaps get a situation, and where, also, she might take work when unable to go out ; and in this way, if she did not become worse, she felt that she could maintain herself. Jessy thought and prayed over this plan, and then went to consult her steady and kind friend, her school-mistress. In doing so, she was obliged to tell more of what she had to endure from the sinful scenes she constantly witnessed at home, than she had ever communicated to any one before. This she did with tears and shame : and when the mistress had heard all she strongly advised her not to leave such a place of wickedness, where she had so long endeavoured in vain to find use, and to trust the future to that God who had hitherto been so gracious to her.

The mistress then offered to assist her in finding a room. Jessy knew that

there was a very small one to be got at the top of the stair in which her friend Mary Scott lived, and begged the mistress to look at it, and settle the taking of it for her. She then went with a lighter heart to get some work. This work she took home, as she could not venture to stay at the shop, and walk back in the cold evening air.

When she got home, her mother was sitting close over the fire, her pipe in her mouth, and the room filled with smoke. Jessy left the door a little open, to clear it away.

‘What are you leaving the door open for?’ asked her mother, in a scolding tone of voice.

‘For the smoke, mother. I cannot take out this fine clean work, till it has cleared away a little.’

‘Wark!—wark!’ scolded out her mother; ‘you and your work are mair fash than if ye maintained the whole family. One time the door maunna be open for your cough, and anither time it maunna be

shut for your work. Shut it this minute, I tell ye, and just find some ither place to live in, if ye maun hae sae mony fikes, and mak naething after a.'

Jessy's heart filled, and she could not speak for a little. She then said, 'Mother, I have been thinking of doing as you say. I have been thinking, if I had another place to live in, I could maintain myself. At any rate, I will not any longer be a burden on you,—I trust the Lord will provide for me.'

'Oh! ay, begin to preach, ye can aye do that at any rate, and much good it has done you,' said her mother scornfully.

'I am going to take a room, and try to maintain myself, mother,' said Jessy, more firmly; 'and whatever the Lord sees fit for me, he will send. I have cause to say, that knowing him has done me much good; and now I am going to give up every earthly trust, and rest only in him.'

Mrs. Grey looked up in Jessy's face, 'What's a' this, Jessy? What is it you mean?'

‘I mean, mother, just what I have said, —I cannot work here. You know I have already had some things so much dirtied, that I was ashamed to take them back. I cannot expect always to be let pass without being made answerable, as the other workers are, for such accidents. My health and strength are failing; so that I cannot go out to the shop. You say that I need not look to you to maintain me ; I am therefore going to try what I can do for myself, and leave the future with God.’

‘A fine story, indeed!’ said Mrs. Grey, not believing that Jessy was in earnest. Jessy assured her that she was, and said it would be a pleasure to her to have her free consent.

‘Consent!’ you are most welcome to do as you like,’ replied her mother ; ‘we’ll see if we hear of this again. Consent! mind, do not say it was want of my consent kept you at home.’

In a few days the room was taken, and a little bed, which the Mistress had lent Jessy

money to purchase, and some other little necessary articles, were placed in it. On Saturday she received her wages, and work for another week. She then returned home, and giving her mother half the money, bade her good-night ; and promising to see her next day, took her small bundle of clothes, and had reached her own little room, before her mother had recovered from her surprise.

Mary Scott had busied herself in making this little room as comfortable as possible. It had been newly white-washed, and the floor made nicely clean, and now a good fire gave it a most cheerful appearance. To be sure, all the furniture in it was a bed, a small deal table, a stool, and some other trifling articles ; but all were perfectly clean and orderly, and to Jessy her new abode seemed delightful. Mary and she had some pleasant conversation together, and, before they parted, read a portion of Scripture.

When Mary was gone, poor Jessy could not help thinking of her mother, and the

thought was indeed a sad one ; yet she felt satisfied, that leaving her was her last and only resource. And after having poured out her heart to God, she lay down in peace, and slept.

Next day was the Sabbath, and a blessed and peaceful Sabbath it was to Jessy. She and Mary went to the house of God together ; and when public worship was over, she could in peace spend her hours of retirement in the duties of that holy day.

Early on Monday morning, Jessy, after having asked the blessing and presence of God, and read a portion of Scripture, sat down to work. There was a good window in her room. It looked eastward, and as she was high up stairs, this window overlooked most of the houses between it and Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. Jessy loved to look at those towering rocky hills, as a bright morning sun now glowed upon them. It also shone cheerily into her own little room, and her heart rose in gratitude

to that glorious Being who created its pleasant beams.

Mary joined Jessy early in the day, bringing her stool and work with her ; and they sat and worked together, and the Bible open between them, that, as they talked, the one or other might occasionally read a verse or two, and then they would seek together to find out its true and practical meaning.

In the middle of the day, Jessy visited her mother. She prayed God, as she went, to turn her heart to receive her kindly, for she shrunk from her harshness. Mrs. Grey was in pretty good humour, and promised, before Jessy came away to go and see her in her 'fine new house,' as she called it ; but added, 'Mind Jessy, this is your own fancy, and if it brings you to ruin, ye need not look to me for help.'

At the close of this day, Jessy had worked twice as much as she could do at her mother's ; and so she continued to do each day during the week, so that, by the end of it, she was able, from her earnings, to pay

a little of the debt she owed her kind friend. Her health, too, seemed much better. Jessy continued to spend her time in this way for several weeks ; at the end of that time she had paid all her debt, and found that she could support herself quite comfortably. Her health, however, as spring advanced, did not improve so much as she expected. Though never so ill as to be prevented working, yet she never felt thoroughly well ; and the thought now often came across her mind, that perhaps she had not long to live.

One day that Mary and she were sitting at work together, Jessy turned up the following text, and read it,—‘ We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,’—and then said, ‘ Mary, can you ever say that you feel that willingness mentioned here ?’

‘ Sometimes I think I could almost say it,’ replied Mary. ‘ After I have spent a Sabbath in the Lord’s house, and in seeking him in prayer, and in thinking of the

holiness and beauty of his character, I have felt at night,—O that I was where the Sabbath never ends ! where I might continually, and without interruption from sin, and ignorance, and darkness, learn more of the glorious character of that Saviour, whom knowing so little as I do, I yet love so far above what I have words to express. At such moments, I have longed to depart and be with Christ ; but you know, Jessy, I am often very ill and many a time I have thought myself dying and then I have so many fears, that I shrink back, and pray, not to be taken yet.’

‘ And what is it you most fear at such times ? ’ asked Jessy.

‘ Oh ! many,—many things ! ’ replied Mary. ‘ My sins then seem to have been so great,—so many duties neglected,—the Bible so carelessly read,—prayer often hurried over, just as a task to keep my conscience at rest,—God forgotten, and other thoughts taking up my mind. Oh ! Jessy, when death seems really near, you

will wonder how different every thing appears.'

'I have sometimes felt as if it was not very distant of late,' said Jessy.

'And could you think of it without fear?' asked Mary.

'No, I cannot just say that; yet it was a strange kind of fear too. If I could have thought all was safe, Oh! how willingly should I have departed! But the very thought—this may be death! has something hurrying and confusing in it. It is the cry in the soul,—'The Bridegroom is coming;'
and it does indeed awaken it in a wonderful manner.'

'Yes,' replied Mary; 'and then, where is the oil to trim the lamp? Mine never seems at hand.'

'And what do you think is that oil, Mary?' asked Jessy.

'You know, Jessy, our minister said on that parable, that the ten virgins represented professors of religion, and the coming of the Bridegroom meant the approach

of death. That the difference between true Christians and mere professors, was proved by the manner in which they were prepared to meet this last enemy. True Christians might indeed be at first startled by his approach, but still they had that knowledge and faith which would enable them, in humble confidence, to go forth and meet their Lord ; but mere professors would then feel that they still had that to seek which alone would make them ready to meet death. Now this alarmed me, because, when death does not appear to be near, then I think I could meet it,—but when the cry—that the Bridegroom is coming, seems really at hand, then I am all in confusion, and can only implore him to delay his coming.’

‘ You always remember the alarming part of a sermon, Mary,’ said Jessy, ‘ and I always remember what is comforting. Have you forgot what Mr. —— said *that* light was, which could alone enable us to meet the Lord ?’

‘Not very well,’ answered Mary.

‘He said,’ continued Jessy, ‘that our last meeting on earth with our Almighty Redeemer, would be in the valley of the shadow of death ;’ but that true Christians knew what it was to meet with him,—they so knew it as to seek constantly for his presence as their chiefest joy. They had by faith, time after time, come to him, and laid their sins on him, and for his precious blood’s sake, received remission and forgiveness. Thus they had often, often, met with him as their Saviour. They had met him in affliction as their refiner,—they had known him as their intercessor,—as their deliverer from the power of sin,—as their Advocate with the Father. In their last earthly meeting with him, he taught them to regard him in a new character. As their trials would then be severest, this character was the one of all others whose love is most tender, and anxious, and watchful, and which is only borne immediately previous to an everlasting union. It is only the light

of the faith and knowledge of Christ, that can enable any poor soul to enter without fear into the valley of the shadow of death.'

'O! I remember now,' said Mary.

'It is want of faith,' said Jessy, 'that makes us shrink back.'

'And consciousness of sin,' added Mary.

'But shall we ever be without that consciousness?' asked Jessy. 'Is there not a something wrong,—a little trusting to our own works for acceptance with God in this, Mary? And does not St. Paul say, that 'by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight?'

'Yes,' replied Mary, 'but he also says, that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.'

'You know, Mary, Mr. ——— said, *that* holiness without which no man could see the Lord, was not a holiness that was to acquit us at the tribunal of God, but a holiness which made us meet to enjoy the presence of God.'

‘He did say so, I remember,’ answered Mary.

‘But, Mary, are we not confusing these two kinds of holiness? We both feel that the thought of heaven is delightful to us. On earth the Sabbath is our day of happiness. We would wish every day to be a Sabbath. May we not hope that this, in some measure, is a beginning of that love of spiritual things, which will make heaven a place of delight and joy to us? But when we think of appearing before God in this poor holiness, all the sins that still cleave to us come into our thoughts, and we feel so defiled, that no wonder we tremble. If we trusted wholly in that righteousness in which there is no spot, to justify us before God, as we suppose we do, then, instead of trembling at the thought of our continual shortcomings, we would rejoice that we were going where sin would forever leave us.’

‘Sometimes I think I see clearly that it ought to be so,’ replied Mary; ‘but then again, I meet with some passage in scrip-

ture, or I hear something said, which turns my thoughts to what is less comforting.’

‘Turns your thoughts from trusting in Christ!’ said Jessy; and as ‘there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved,’ so, when we lose our confidence in him, we feel that we are without hope.’

Jessy and Mary often talked thus together, and helped each other in their course. As the summer passed away, Jessy did not feel that her strength returned, and in the autumn, she began to suffer frequently from a pain in her side, and oppression on her breathing. These gradually increased as the weather became colder; and at last she found that she could not go out, without making herself so ill as to oblige her to sit up half the night, and this prevented her being able to work part of the next day. Jessy’s friends brought her work when she could no longer go out, and for a time she continued to support herself. Before the winter was over, however, she became so

weak that she could not sit up above half the day. On first being obliged to confine herself to the house, Jessy had sent for her kind doctor. He attended her regularly, but except, perhaps for a day on first using them his prescriptions failed in producing any effect. He did not at first seem to understand her complaints perfectly, and brought some of his medical friends to visit her. None of their prescriptions however, were more successful; and the breathlessness, which was the most distressing of Jessy's complaints, increased so rapidly, that she was soon forced to give up every attempt to work, and spent great part of her days and nights sitting up, supported by pillows, in bed.

It was at this period, when every means of earthly support seemed cut off, that Jessy's kind friend the school-mistress, applied to one of those ladies who still took charge of the school, at which she had first received her religious impressions. This lady was deeply interested in poor Jessy, after having

heard her short history since she left school, and immediately went to visit her. With some difficulty she found the close in which she lived, and after climbing up a very long stair, inhabited apparently by many families, and which in some parts was very filthy, and after being half frightened by the noise and confusion which she heard as she passed some of the many doors she at last reached poor Jessy's little room. Here all seemed peace. The room was very light, as clean as possible, and in the most perfect order. In one corner was a little low bed, on which Jessy lay, or rather sat, her head resting on the pillows which supported her. The door, on the lady's knocking, had been softly opened by a pale, gentle looking girl, who, after having placed a chair, and closed the Bible which she had been reading to Jessy, and which she had left on the bed, took her work, and modestly left the room.

‘Do you remember me, Jessy?’ asked the lady, sitting down by Jessy, and holding out her hand to her.

‘O! yes, ma’am, I have good cause to remember you,’ replied Jessy, taking the lady’s hand, and clasping it in both of hers. The exertion of saying these few words, increased the rapidity of Jessy’s breathing so much, that she seemed ready to faint. The lady looked at her in alarm, but Jessy smiled and after recovering a little, said, ‘That blessed school!’ She could say no more.

‘Would you say Jessy’ asked the lady, ‘that the instructions you received at school were blessed to you?’

‘O! yes, yes.’

The lady was moved. ‘You find, Jessy, that the truths you learnt there, now support you in this severe illness.’

‘Yes,’ replied Jessy, and after a little added, ‘and in the view of death.’

‘Have you no hopes of recovery, Jessy?’

‘None, I do not wish it.’

‘And have you no fears?’

‘Not now,’ replied Jessy.

‘The effect of speaking seems so dis-

‘tressing to you, Jessy,’ said her friend, ‘that I think you would perhaps answer me more easily by turning up passages of scripture. Could you, in that way, tell me how your fear for that ‘king of terrors’ has been taken away.’

Jessy turned up the following passages, one after another,— ‘The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. If God be for us, who can be against us? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh continual intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’

‘These are indeed precious words’ said the lady, ‘and they are happy who can apply them to themselves.’

Jessy answered by turning to these words,— ‘The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say,

Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' And again,—'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.'

'The offer is, indeed, altogether free,' said the lady; 'was there any heavenly gold, any pure righteousness required of us to make it ours, we should have no hope.'

'O no!' said Jessy, 'It is free,—all free.'

After conversing for some time in this manner, the lady rose to go. Jessy held the hand she gave her, till she had turned up the 41st Psalm, and pointed to the first verses. Her friend read them, then shaking hands kindly with Jessy, said,—'I trust I may be the means of some temporal good to you, Jessy; and I am sure, it must be my own fault if I do not receive good infinitely more valuable, by seeing how God supports you.'

This lady continued to visit Jessy very

frequently for the five or six following weeks, during which her sufferings gradually increased, and each time received some new proof of her readiness for her great change. During this time, Jessy could speak scarcely any, but she contrived as long as she was able, to converse by turning up passages of scripture. At last she became too weak to do this, and could then answer only by perhaps a word or two, or by the sweet and pleasant expressions of her countenance. Several ladies, friends of the one she knew and loved best, also visited her, and provided for all her wants. These ladies always read to her when they came, and the lowly, but heavenly expression of her looks, as they read, conveyed, as much as words could do, how precious the word of God was to her soul. Mary Scott, also, devoted herself to her friend, and never left her but when her own strength failed. The excessive breathlessness with which Jessy was afflicted, continued to increase so much as to bring on fits of extreme suffering. Du-

ring these fits, Jessy's friends often expected to see her breathe her last. The doctor saw her often, but no earthly skill was of any avail. Her fits became more and more frequent, and though, when she had any ease, Jessy continued to look even cheerful and happy, those who knew her could not wish her sufferings to be prolonged. When it was found necessary for a person to sit up all night with her, one of the ladies went herself to Jessy's mother, (who now scarcely ever came to see her,) and told her how ill her child was, and asked her to sit up with her at night, by turns with her other friends. Her answer was, *That she would do so, if the ladies paid her for it.* Poor Jessy was not told this ; but she never afterwards saw her mother.

At last the time came when Jessy was indeed to hear the cry,—‘Behold the bridegroom cometh!’ But now her lamp was trimmed, and the cry was welcome. The day before that event, one of her kind ladies visited her. When she was going to read, Jessy attempted to speak, but was so weak

her voice was inaudible. The lady put her ear close to her, and she said, ‘The 17th of John.’ This the lady read, and Jessy seemed to feel every word. When the lady was leaving her, she made an effort, and looking smilingly at her, and then up to heaven, said ‘Farewell.’ ‘That night she had many severe fits ; and at last, after one in which she suffered much, she at once ceased to breathe, and lay in perfect stillness. Her friends at first scarcely believed it was all over : but when the stillness continued, and the face relaxed into that look of inexpressible calmness which follows death, even Mary Scott thanked God that her beloved friend would suffer no more, and followed in solemn, but delightful thought, her spirit, now made perfect, into the presence of that glorious Redeemer, whom, while on earth, she had loved so ardently.

A few days after this, Jessy’s remains were laid in their narrow house. Her stepfather was asked to attend as chief mourner, but he had no proper clothes, and declined

going. The Sabbath-school master, Mary Scott's father, and a few of his friends attended. The school-mistress, dressed in mourning, and some of the school-girls, also went to the church-yard, and waited to see the last mournful duties performed. At last the few and lowly mourners entered the church-yard, and walked slowly to its furthest and most crowded corner, where a grave was newly dug. The mistress approached nearer. Many new made graves were in the same place. When all was completed, and the withered turf laid on the grave, one of the girls said in a whisper to the mistress,—‘O mistress! what makes them put the graves so close together in that corner? See, they are obliged to tread on some that seem quite new.’

‘That is the place for the poor, my dear,’ replied the mistress: ‘but when the last trumpet shall sound, and the graves give up their dead, many, many, will rise to glory, who have been left to charity for the earth in which to sleep their long, long sleep.’

THE TWO SISTERS.

BY MRS. SHERWOOD.

ANNE BURTON and Jane Hill were sisters. Jane Hill the younger, was a widow, but had no family. They lived together in a small house in a little town in Herefordshire; maintaining themselves by needlework and occasionally going out to wash and iron, to cook or nurse. They upon the whole bore good characters, and were supposed to be fond of each other, as sisters ought to be; but the truth was, that the house and furniture being a joint property, left them by their father, they lived together only for conveniency's sake; while there was in fact no sisterly regard between them.

The characters of these two women, although passing, as I before said, pretty well in the eyes of the world, were such as would not bear a closer inspection. It was with

them, as with all other worldly persons ; their affections were set on things on the earth, not on things above. And although their natural dispositions were different—Anne Burton, on the one hand, being of a lively temper and free carriage ; while Jane, on the other hand, was grave and sour—yet were they both equally the slaves of sin, each indulging privately her own darling propensity.

Anne Burton was given to excess in drinking, but not so as to expose herself to public shame ; for she feared the world, and wished to keep up a respectable name in the town where her family had dwelt in credit for several years. She therefore never took her glass very freely, till she was going to bed : and then, indeed, she treated herself whenever she could afford it, with so large a dram, as even to prevent her crawling up stairs, without her sister's help. And many were the times that the curtains of her bed would have been set on fire, by her carelessness, if Jane had not narrowly watched over her.

During the day she indulged herself more sparingly, seldom taking enough to produce any visible effect ; though she never failed (unless money run low) to take as much at

her dinner, as served to raise her spirits and set her a talking: and then, as she was never at a loss for words, and was fond of a joke, she would run on in a manner, which made persons who were at all nice and particular, shun her society; although in general she had command enough over herself, even at such times, to suit her discourse to her company, and especially when that company consisted of her betters.

Yet, with all this, Jane Hill was more disliked by her neighbours than Anne Burton, although she fell not into the gross sins of her sister; for she was temperate in her drink and diet, and offended less with her tongue. But she was exceedingly close and stingy, and had a high opinion of herself, while she despised her neighbours. She prided herself on the decency of her life, and looked with contempt and abhorrence on all her fellow sinners.

She had married, early in life, an old man who had one son by a former wife. To this son she had behaved so ill that he ran away from home, and after having suffered every species of misery, had died, leaving one little boy.

This poor boy used to beg about the streets in the utmost wretchedness, and of

ten came to Jane Hill, his grandfather's widow, to beg a bit of bread. But Jane Hill never could be persuaded to do any thing for him, although she had actually in possession more than twenty guineas which she had found among her old husband's stores after his death. But as she thought the world knew nothing of this circumstance, she pretended that having gained nothing by her husband, she could not be required to do any thing for his grandson.

Covetousness and pride were the besetting sins of Jane; and though these sins were more decent than those of Anne Burton, yet they proved equally effectual in separating the soul which was under their dominion from the Saviour, and in working out, we fear, its everlasting destruction.

Such was the situation of these two sisters, the younger of whom was about forty years of age when the minister of the parish being removed, the benefice was given to a man of extraordinary godliness, one who was enabled by his heavenly Master to set forth all the doctrines of the Christian religion in such order and harmony, that no one truth was ever brought forward in exclusion of another, but each one appeared in this

holy man's discourses, in its due place and fairest proportion.

This excellent man soon filled his church, insomuch that every part of it was crowded every Sabbath, the people running together as if they had never heard of the Christian religion before. Many who went only to stare and wonder, returned home to pray, and many were effectually converted and turned to the Lord, who is oftentimes *pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.* 1 Cor. i. 21.

Religion now became the fashion in the town and country about, while the last discourse from the pulpit for the most part afforded the subject of common talk when neighbours met together.

When all sorts were thus running to the church, Anne Burton and Jane Hill would not be left behind. They went at first, like the generality, to wonder and stare; but what they heard there had at least the effect of drawing them thither again. So that if the preaching of the Gospel did not reach their heart, it nevertheless informed their understandings, communicating to them a great deal of head-knowledge on the subject of religion, which every day increased,

as they continued to attend their minister, and to hear the talk of their neighbours.

With respect to Jane Hill, whatever change her feelings and sentiments underwent, being a woman of few words, she for the most part kept all to herself. But Anne Burton very soon became not only a great talker on religious subjects, but a vehement professor ; and although not one of her private habits was influenced by her religion, yet there was not a woman of the lower classes in all the town, who made such a noise about the Gospel.

As I before said, she had always a great command of words ; and now there was not an expression used by their excellent minister which she had not at her tongue's end ; and painful it is to say, that the times which she chiefly chose for speaking on the subjects, were when her spirits were raised by a private dram. At such times, she would lament the sins of her nature, and run on surprisingly upon other subjects too sacred to be mentioned in this place, or in any other place whatever, or at any time, when the heart of the speaker is not duly prepared.

Many inexperienced persons, even among the gentlefolks in the neighbourhood, were imposed upon by these high professions ;

while their kindness, and indiscreet commendation, encouraged the poor woman to carry on these pretences, by which she deceived herself, as well as others. No one thoroughly knew her but her sister Jane, who, being well acquainted with her private habits, felt the utmost disgust when she heard her professions; looking upon her at the same time with a contempt, which she had no care to hide. And indeed, I believe that the loud and empty professions of Anne Burton were a dreadful hinderance to the well doing of Jane Hill.

These sisters sometimes passed whole days together without speaking to each other, or speaking only to quarrel. Their contentions were commonly now upon religious subjects. Jane generally began, and charged Anne with hypocrisy, in pretending to be religious, while she privately indulged in so odious a vice as drunkenness. And Anne in return would point out her sister's covetousness, and accuse her of cruelty to those whom she ought in justice to assist.

Jane's reply was generally of this sort; —that she worked for all she got, and others might do the same; and that she made no profession of religion, although she knew that she had much more than many who did.

Anne Burton was louder, and had more to say than Jane; she therefore generally had the best of the dispute, which for the most part ended, on Jane's side, with a long fit of gloom and sulkiness.

In those places where religion becomes a fashion, and where, in consequence, there is a sudden and extraordinary increase of professors, it is necessary for a careful minister to use such means as shall lead persons to search their own hearts, and look deeply into themselves; since *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*. Poor people, especially when their superiors in rank become pious, may often be led to assume an appearance of religion, in order to please their betters; by which means, they not only impose upon their neighbours, and deceive themselves, but even bring themselves into danger of final condemnation.

It is true that you must not wait till you have left your sins, before you go to Christ: you must carry the burden of your sins, and lay it down at the feet of Him, who has undertaken to bear it for you. But when you have taken your sins to the cross, you must be careful to leave them there.

When you have once come to Christ, and

are become a professor of his religion, if you have been covetous, you must be covetous no more. If you have lived in hatred, you must hate your brother no more. If you have been an adulterer, you must never more entertain an unclean thought. If you have been a drunkard, you must henceforward be sober. If your religion does not enable you to lead a better life, either you have no religion at all, or it is of a wrong sort. It is true, that good works are not the forerunners, but they are constantly the fruit of faith.

Beware of false professors, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves ; ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit ; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Matt. vii. 15—17.

Of all this the good minister was aware ; and therefore carefully watched for the fruits of his labours, namely, the reformation of morals among his people. There were many who gave evidence of their faith, by turning from their sins, and leading holy lives ; but others who attended his ministry, gave him so little satisfaction on this head, that he determined to make his visits from

house to house, for the purpose of trying what private exhortation might accomplish.

In the course of these visits, he called at the house of the two sisters : it was about three o'clock in the evening when he came in, and he found Anne Burton alone. She was employed with her needle, and was sitting in the kitchen, which Jane, who was very neat, had just put in order. Money at that time being low, Anne had taken little, if any thing, after her dinner that day ; on which account she fancied herself in a particularly good state to receive the minister. He immediately led the discourse to religious subjects, when he found that Anne at least understood the leading doctrines of Christianity, and could speak fluently upon them ; notwithstanding which, there was something in her manner, which did not please the good man. If she spoke of her sins, it was in the manner of one who repeated a lesson by rote ; if she spoke of the Saviour, it was with a degree of familiarity which no one could use who had an abiding sense of the immeasurable distance there is between the Almighty and Holy God and his sinful creatures ; in short, she seemed to want humility, while her appearance bespoke not the state of one whose

body was the temple of the Holy Spirit of God.

The good minister felt hurt, and, the more so, as the poor woman continued to talk freely and rapidly on religious subjects. He was silent for a time, being much troubled ; after which he took occasion to point out to her, that religion must begin in a very deep and humbling sense of sin, of which the general effect is, to make persons silent and fearful of offending with their lips, instead of pouring out a torrent of words. He assured her also that assistance to do well would be given to every one who desired it : and then, saying that he would take an opportunity to call upon her again, he took his leave.

On leaving the house, the good minister turned out of the street, and walked slowly up a retired path that led to the fields in which his own house was situated ; meditating as he passed, on the state of man upon earth, how, through the sinfulness of his nature, he turns every thing meant for his good into means of his destruction ; how even religion itself, in places where it meets with respect, becomes either a subject of ostentation, or a cloak of disguise. It then

struck him that he had not sufficiently laboured to open to his people the depravity of the heart, and the utter helplessness of man's nature ; but had, perhaps, led them on to cry *peace, peace, when there was no peace*. Thus the truly godly minister mourns over each particular wanderer of his flock, and takes a part of the blame of every failure.

While he was meditating in this manner, mixing his meditations with prayers, he saw a woman coming towards him, from the way of the fields ; and as she drew nearer, he perceived that it was Jane Hill. He stopped her, and telling her where he had been, he expressed his anxiety for the good of her soul, in common with that of every individual of his flock. After which he informed her, that he had been much surprised, in conversing with her sister, at the knowledge she displayed of the doctrines of the Christian religion : adding that he hoped Anne Burton did not consider the ability of talking upon those subjects, as all that was necessary to salvation ; but that she endeavoured to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Jane was very glad of this opportunity to lay open what she called her sister's pre-

tences, and gave such an account of Anne's private conduct, as, although it did not surprise the good man, afflicted him deeply.

He answered, "I shall repeat my call very soon." And then addressing himself again to Jane respecting her own soul, he said that he hoped her sister's example would be a warning to her. He intimated moreover, that there were many sins not so scandalous as drunkenness, which were equally displeasing to God: that these sins, which were such as the pharisees, in old time, were guilty of, namely, oppression of the fatherless, pride, and cruelty, were perhaps more to be dreaded than the sins of the flesh; because they seldom brought men to shame on earth, but were as effectual in separating the soul from God.

"There is," added this excellent man, "in your manner when speaking of your sister, an apparent want of tenderness, which seems to make you glory in her shame. O cultivate, I beseech you, a kinder feeling towards her; and remember, with respect to yourself, that pride will as certainly exclude you from the kingdom of heaven, if not subdued, as want of sobriety will shut her out; according to our Lord's address to the proud pharisee—Verily I say unto

you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Matt. xxi. 31.

The good minister had seen something in Jane Hill's manner, which led him to use this reproof; and he hoped that it might be of use, in opening her eyes to her own state of mind, which was, in fact, no better than that of her sister.

In a few days, the minister, having made some further inquiries respecting the two sisters, called upon them again, and finding them both at home, entered into a most serious and heart-searching conversation with them. He perceived, he said, that they were both well acquainted with the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion; that they were both in some degree convinced that they could be saved only by Christ the Redeemer; and that without an interest in the Saviour, nothing remained for them, *but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.* Heb. x. 27.

"Hitherto," said he, "you are come, and here you stand. You talk and call to others, holding forth to them what they must do to be saved; thus, by your own words, sealing your own condemnation. But you will come no further yourselves, and for this rea-

son"—(here he paused and looked hard at them)—“because each of you have a darling, a besetting sin, which holds you in bands of iron and brass; and which will hold you down beyond all possibility of relief, unless you speedily attempt to break them, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

“What was it,” continued the good minister, “that prevented the armies of Israel from conquering the idolators of Ai? Was it not the accursed thing which Achan had hid in the camp? Therefore, because of that accursed thing, the Children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned themselves to flight as an accursed people; neither would the Lord afford them his presence any more, until they put away the accursed thing from among them. Josh. vii. 12. In like manner, the evil habits which you cherish, the love of liquor in the elder sister, and the pride and love of money in the younger, render you utterly unable to stand before the enemies of your soul; neither can you ever expect the Lord to be with you, until these accursed things are removed from among you.”

The good minister then proceeded in an affectionate and earnest manner, to exhort them to lay aside those sins by which they

were so easily beset, saying, as the Lord did to Joshua, on the occasion above mentioned, *Get thee up ; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face ?* Joshua vii. 10. "There is help to be had," continued he, "and power will be given us to overcome the vilest lusts, if we are but willing to cast ourselves as utterly helpless and self-condemned, at the foot of the cross."

He then pointed out to them various sweet passages of Scripture, in which assistance is promised to those who humbly seek it in the name and through the merits of the Saviour, and who are willing utterly to renounce all self-dependance. And he concluded his discourse, by laying before the two sisters several awful instances which had fallen under his own knowledge of persons making a considerable profession of religion and giving hopes of better things who on finding that the gospel would not permit them the indulgence of some besetting sin, had preferred the poor and low enjoyment of that sin even to the everlasting felicity of heaven ; thus perishing at last in their iniquity.

The good minister did not leave the two sisters without prayer, after which he followed up this beginning of his labours for

their common good, by several other private visits ; in all of which he addressed them in the most serious and impressive manner. But at length finding his labours to be wholly without fruit, and being called elsewhere, upon more promising grounds, his visits became less and less frequent, till they entirely ceased.

I have no pleasure in telling you the end of this story. Anne Burton could not resolve to give up her favourite liquor ; nor Jane Hill to part with any of her guineas for her late husband's grandson ; and these sins lying on their minds, rendered religion unsavoury to them. They continued to go now and then to church ; but they had no delight in its holy ordinances, for Israel's God was not with them, because they refused to put away the accursed thing.

Anne Burton's sin gained so fast upon her after she had refused to hearken to the private exhortations of her good minister, that it speedily ruined her health ; insomuch that she died before her fiftieth year, talking of religion till nearly the last, yet still refusing to give up her sins. A short time before her death, she became exceedingly cast down, the delusions of Satan now having faded away, and nothing being left

but horror and amazement. But her poor head was so disturbed by the drams she even then continued to take, that she could not receive comfort from any about her, although some were with her, who would have led her, even at that eleventh hour, to the Saviour.

Jane Hill lived to a great age, and remained to the last, hard and unsubdued. In her death there was as little hope as in that of her sister.

The case of these women was peculiarly awful, because they knew the truth; but insomuch as they loved their sins more than their own souls, religion became to them the savour of death unto death. Reader, forsake thy sins, and the Gospel will be to thee a savour of life unto life. 2 Cor. ii. 16.

THE END.



